721*

4109. h. 11.
1 — 9.

AN ESSAY

ON THE

CLERGY.

" NEC enim is ſolus Reip. prodeſt, qui candidatos " extrahit, et tuetur reos, et de pace, belloque cenſet: " ſed qui juventutem exhortatur, qui in tanta bonorum præ- " ceptorum inopia, virtute inſtruit animos, qui ad pecu- " niam luxuriamque curſu ruentes prenſat ac retrahit, et ſi " nihil aliud, certe moratur, in privato publicum negotium " agit. An ille plus præſtat, qui inter peregrinos et cives " aut urbanus prætor adeuntibus adſeſſoris verba pronuntiat: " quam quid ſit juſtitia, quid pietas, quid patientia, quid " fortitudo, quid mortis contemptus, quid deorum intel- " lectus, quam gratuitum bonum ſit bona conſcientia." Seneca, de Tranquillitate Animi.

" Les principes du Chriſtianiſme bien gravés dans le cœur, " ſeroient infiniment plus forts que ce faux honneur des " monarchies, ces virtus humaines des republiques, et cette " crainte ſervile des états deſpotiques." Monteſquieu.

BRITISH MUSEUM

AN

ESSAY

ON THE

CLERGY;

Their STUDIES, RECREATIONS, DECLINE of INFLUENCE, &c. &c.

BY THE REVEREND

W. J. TEMPLE, LL. B.

Rector of MAMHEAD, in DEVONSHIRE.

LONDON,

Printed for EDWARD and CHARLES DILLY.

MDCCLXXIV.

BRITISH MUSEUM

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS,

AND THE REVEREND

THE CLERGY OF ENGLAND,

THE SUPPORTERS OF

PIETY AND VIRTUE,

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

14+

TO

THE RIGHT REVEREND

THE ARCHBISHOPS AND BISHOPS,

AND THE REVEREND

THE CLERGY OF ENGLAND,

THE SUPPORTERS OF

PIETY AND VIRTUE,

THE FOLLOWING ESSAY

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBED.

CONTENTS.

	Chap.	Page.
SHORT Abſtract of the Hiſtory of Religion, or of Eccleſiaſtical Influence.	I.	1
Of ſome of the Benefits we owe to Revelation.	II.	6
Of the Utility of the Clerical Character.	III.	14
Of ſome Particulars reſpecting Candidates for Holy Orders.	IV.	18
Of the Views, Education, and Studies of the Clergy.	V.	21
Of the Style of the Pulpit.	VI.	45
Of the Decline of the Influence of the Clergy, and of the Progreſs of Infidelity.	VII.	51
Part of the ſame Subject continued, or of Non-reſidence.	VIII.	71
Of the external Appearance, and Recreations, of the Clergy.	IX.	76

Part

Part of the ſame Subject continued. X. 82
Should the Clergy intereſt themſelves in the Public Welfare? XI. 85
Of Teſts, or Subſcription to Articles in Matter of Religion. XII. 90

AN

AN ESSAY ON THE CLERGY:

Their Studies, Recreations, Decline of their Influence, &c. &c.

CHAPTER I.

Short Abſtract of the Hiſtory of Religion, or of Eccleſiaſtical Influence.

WHEREVER civility has made any progreſs, we find an order of men to whom the care of religion is committed. Even nations removed but a few degrees from barbariſm have their clergy or prieſts. The great influence of the

Druids among the antient Gauls and Britons is well known. Some kind of religious eſtabliſhment ſeems, indeed, unavoidably neceſſary in every period of ſociety. In civilized and highly poliſhed ſtates, the generality of men appear wholly engroſſed in the purſuit of power, of riches, or of pleaſure. The attention of ſavage and barbarous nations is almoſt intirely occupied in procuring the means of ſubſiſtence. We learn from hiſtory and experience, that mankind under either deſcription very rarely turn their thoughts to the conception of a Deity, much leſs to the obligations they owe him [*a*]. But as in the perpetual viciſſitudes

[*a*] From the accounts given us of ſavage and barbarous nations, the apprehenſion of a Deity does not ſeem an obvious inference. In civilized ſtates, perſons of leiſure and reflection deduce it from the frame and magnificence of the univerſe, the ſplendor of the heavenly orbs, and the regularity of their revolutions, the ſucceſſion of the ſeaſons, the conſtant and grateful viciſſitude of night and day, the infinite variety of animals, vegetables, &c. their preſerving their

ſitudes of human affairs, many unavoidble occaſions, ill ſucceſs in hunting, or in war, a famine, a peſtilence, or ſeeming violations of the ordinary courſe of nature by eclipſes, hurricanes, or earthquakes, will frequently ſuggeſt the idea of ſome ſuperior power, from their own motives of action, ſhort-ſighted and intereſted mortals will naturally imagine, that the apparent wrath of this Being may be appeaſed, and his favour conci-

their ſeveral ſpecies diſtinct, their powers and capacities, means of ſubſiſting, &c. &c. —"affiduitate "quotidiana, et conſuetudine oculorum, aſſueſcunt "animi: neque admirantur, neque requirunt rationes "earum rerum, quas ſemper vident." Cicero, de Natura Deorum, § ii. Theſe ſureſt proofs of a Creator and Governor of the world, are overlooked or diſregarded by the American, Indian, or Laplander, and even by the vulgar of poliſhed communities: but a monſtrous birth, an eclipſe, or violent thunder-ſtorm, or, in leſs happy climates, an earthquake or inundation, throw preſently on their knees, characters of the above deſcription. In the ſame manner we may obſerve, that nothing can be more diſhonourable and unworthy than the notions of moſt nations of the Divinity, till in ſome degree corrected by the progreſs of ſcience.

liated, by attentions, reſpects, and donations. Hence offerings, ſacrifices; hence, in the progreſs of ſociety, an order of men dedicated ſolely to his ſervice; and hence, in length of time, their privileges and power: for it was an obvious concluſion, that the honours paid to the immediate ſervants of the Deity, could not but be acceptable to the Deity himſelf. As the Clergy in common with the reſt of mankind are ſubject to the weakneſſes and frailties of humanity, and liable to entertain falſe and miſtaken notions of happineſs; they took advantage of this way of thinking, and, by various artifices and expedients, carried their power, in barbarous and in ſome civilized ſtates, to a pitch quite enormous. It appears from Herodotus, Diodorus Siculus, and Strabo (who but copies the former), that it was as exorbitant and domineering in antient Ægypt and Æthiopia, as Cæſar and Tacitus repreſent it to have been afterwards in Germany and the other Northern nations.

tions. In Greece and in Rome, inhabited by a wiſer people, and where juſter notions of government obtained, it was confined within much narrower bounds. The birth of our Saviour gave a new idea of it. After Chriſtianity became the eſtabliſhed religion of the empire, it daily increaſed till the ſubverſion of the remains of that ruinous dominion. It roſe again with the influence of the biſhops of Rome: and though under them, like a mighty river, it for ſeveral ages overflowed its banks, and deluged the countries it ought to have enriched; it was once more checked in the impetuoſity of its courſe, and reduced within a narrower channel, by the penetration, the ardour, the intrepidity of Luther, and other concurring cauſes. If we except the throes and ſtruggles of its ſecond Evangelical birth at that happy period, and a few other inſtances, its influence has ever ſince been highly ſalutary and beneficial to mankind. Indeed, when confined within pro-

per bounds, it will always continue to be ſo, notwithſtanding the unjuſt reflections and ill-judged attempts of ſome eminent writers, who, contrary to that humanity they profeſs, and on which they pretend to value themſelves, ſacrifice with ſo little ſcruple or remorſe the welfare and happineſs of ſeveral of their fellow-citizens to ſingularity, vanity, and an empty name.

CHAP. II.

Of ſome of the Benefits we owe to Revelation.

TO enumerate all the benefits derived to mankind from Revelation, would be to write a volume. At preſent it will be ſufficient to mention only a few of the moſt obvious. The abſurdity and impiety of the religions of Paganiſm, and the conſequent corruption and depravity of the human race at the birth of our Saviour,

Saviour, is notorious to all who have the leaſt knowledge of hiſtory. Even Learning and Philoſophy were as much at a loſs, and often as erroneous in their notions reſpecting the attributes of the Deity, and the works of Creation and Providence, as Ignorance and Superſtition. A multiplicity of gods, ſubject to the worſt imperfections and weakneſſes of human paſſion, was a general belief. Some made the world eternal, others the production of accident: one excluded the Deity from the government of the univerſe; another degraded him even below the level of humanity, making him the ſlave of what they called Fate or Deſtiny: others adhered to no certain opinion, inclining ſometimes to one, ſometimes to another, as influenced by caprice, by intereſt, or by vanity. Even the leaſt unworthy notions of the Deity were confined to a very ſmall number. For what a ſmall number were the heads of ſects and their followers, in compariſon

with their numerous fellow-citizens! nay, in a manner to the whole human race! Their notions, their exhortations, could have but a very narrow and confined range and influence. The generality of mankind were in a deep and almoſt impenetrable darkneſs, with regard to truths the moſt eſſential both to our temporal and eternal happineſs. The appearance, therefore, of ſuch a divine perſonage as our Saviour, of the promulgation of ſuch a ſublime theory of religion and morality as is inculcated in the New Teſtament, ſeemed abſolutely neceſſary, in order to extricate mankind out of ſuch a labyrinth of folly, incertainty, depravity, and impiety. Why all the human race, except the Jewiſh nation, were ſuffered to grovel ſo long in this ſtate of intellectual, or moral darkneſs; and why the Sun of truth and righteouſneſs was apparently ſo dilatory in riſing to diſpel this gloom, and to enlighten the minds of men, it would

be preſumption in us to inquire. The ways of God are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts. With equal reaſon might we aſk, why has he not beſtowed on the inhabitants of the different regions of the earth the ſame benign and genial climate, a form of government every where equally favourable to virtue and to happineſs? why is there any diſtinction made in the proportion of health, of talents, of property, of natural diſpoſition to vice or virtue, that is diſtributed to the numberleſs ſons of the human race? The ſmalleſt conſideration, the leaſt reflection, will convince us, that inquiries of ſo intricate a nature are above the reach of our finite underſtanding, and unconnected with our happineſs. When we cannot comprehend, our duty is, to check our preſumption, to acquieſce, and adore.

To what are we indebted for the humanity and ſelf-command of the laws of nations and of war in modern Europe, but

but to the benign influence of Chriſtianity? During the hoſtile ſtruggles of rival and contending ſtates, fertile provinces are no longer rendered waſte and deſolate by fire and ſword; cities are no longer abandoned to the luſt, the avarice, the fury, of a brutal ſoldiery, without reſpect to condition, age, or ſex; but the inhabitants, though ſubdued, are ſtill deemed intitled to life, to liberty, to property, to laws, and even to religion [*b*]. The mother no longer thinks ſhe diſcharges the duty of a tender parent, when by the cord or dagger ſhe reſcues from future miſery her ſmiling infant; the old, the young, every ſex, every rank, no longer famiſhed and deſperate, dread a leſs cruel fate from rampires, from moats, from fire, from the voluntary ſword, than from the inhumanity and atrocity of the enemy. To what other cauſe, but to the mild humanity of our Holy Religion, do we no longer behold

[*b*] Monteſquieu.

ſuch

ſuch monſters on the abſolute thrones of Europe, as the Pagan Princes of antient, or Mahometan ones of modern times. We are told it is the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, that, notwithſtanding the ruinous extent of empire and defects of climate, has checked the progreſs of deſpotiſm in Æthiopia, and carried into the middle of Africk the manners and the laws of Europe. In ſhort, the great-ones of the earth, they who diſdain and ſpurn all human reſtraint and authority, are now not only convinced that unleſs they in ſome meaſure make juſtice the rule of their conduct, unleſs they in ſome degree conſider the good of their ſubjects as the end of their government, they will be both leſs happy, leſs powerful, leſs illuſtrious in this ſtate of probation, but certainly forever miſerable in a future exiſtence. It muſt, indeed, be acknowledged, that before the Reformation, owing to the corruption of the court of Rome, and

almoſt

almoſt equal ignorance of the clergy and laity of the divine precepts of the New Teſtament, we read of ſeveral inſtances of treachery, cruelty, and atrocity, in public communities, in princes, in private individuals; but ſince that propitious æra, ſince the knowledge of the New Covenant has been more generally diffuſed by the invention of the art of printing, &c. neither our own annals, nor thoſe of our neighbours, are polluted and deformed by violations of the moſt ſolemn oaths, of the moſt ſacred engagements, by mining poiſon, or the aſſaſſinating dagger, uſed as a means to attain the objects of ambition, or other intereſted purſuit, to remove a rival, or take vengeance on an enemy. And to what other cauſe do our modern moraliſts owe their enlarged and ſuitable ſentiments, reſpecting the attributes of the Deity, and of the duty and offices of man? Now the reign of ſuperſtition is brought to a

final

final concluſion, her impieties, her human, her animal ſacrifices, her omens, her prodigies, her fortunate, and unfortunate days, her intereſted and lying oracles, are heard of no more; the carcaſes of animals are confined to be the food of mortal man, and no longer offered in ſacrifice to an immortal and immaterial God. Man, unappalled by idle and viſionary terrors, in all his undertakings, in the very extremity of danger and alarm, depends for ſucceſs and an happy iſſue on his own prudence alone, on his virtue, on the protection and favour of a benevolent Deity. In one word, to what may be called the re-publication of this perfect ſyſtem of religion and morality, and the weekly lectures of the clergy, we are indebted for our worthy knowledge of the Deity, of our own origin, of our redemption, of our peculiar duty, of our future hopes.

CHAP. III.

Of the Utility of the Clerical Character.

EVERY profeſſion is neceſſary and honourable in proportion to its utility and the difficulty of attaining excellence in it. We reſpect the Phyſician, the Lawyer, the Soldier, for their care of our health, of our rights, of our lives and properties. Virtue is the profeſſion of the Divine. He paints and enforces its beauty and excellence by his converſation, by his diſcourſes, by his practice and example. Virtue comprehends the whole of our duty—piety to God, juſtice to men, temperance in ourſelves. Hence the Clergyman recommends to us the public and private worſhip and adoration of that benevolent and almighty Being, to whom we owe all that we are, exiſtence, ſupport, health, talents; hence he ſhews the propriety, expediency, neceſſity,

ceſſity, of ſincerity in our profeſſions, fidelity to our obligations, upright and laudable views in the whole ſeries of our conduct; and hence he alſo enjoins the moderate uſe of that nouriſhment, and of all thoſe numberleſs bleſſings and enjoyments, with which the kind Parent of the world has ſo bountifully ſupplied us. In infancy and in youth, when our minds are yet unpolluted by vice and error, when the impreſſions they receive in a manner determine the future colour of our lives, he endeavours to ſow in us the firſt principles of religion and virtue; he watches their progreſs, he brings them forward with an anxious attention; to him, in the words of the poet,

The leaves, the flowers, the fruits belong;

he defends them from the blights and mildews of prejudice, pernicious ſophiſtry, and the baneful contagion of ill example. Nor does his kind paternal care withdraw even here its beneficial influence.

In

In the other ſtages of our exiſtence, he ſtill keeps an attentive eye on our morals and conduct, he exerts his utmoſt endeavours; he calls forth all the powers of his mind, his reaſon, his memory, his imagination, to repel and defeat the alluring and formidable attacks of ſenſuality, of ambition, of avarice, and to rouſe and excite us to the faithful and diligent diſcharge of our duty, in our various relations and conditions in life, as huſband and wife, as parent and child, as kindred, as magiſtrate and ſubject, as members of the ſame community. He goes ſtill farther; he is commiſſioned and authorized by law, both human and divine, to promiſe and enſure us felicity, both temporal and eternal, as the reward of our compliance and obedience: but ſhould we diſregard his admonitions, ſhould we contemn his arguments, ſhould we, inſtead of making religion and virtue the meaſure and rule of our conduct and manners, abandon ourſelves to the

domi-

domination of impiety, ſenſuality, and injuſtice, he is equally empowered by the ſame authority to alarm and threaten us with anxiety, contempt, misfortune in this tranſitory ſcene of things, with the juſt wrath of an offended Deity, and eternal miſery in a future exiſtence. Certainly then a character, certainly then a profeſſion, whoſe ſole occupation it is to practiſe virtue itſelf, and recommend it to others by all the arguments of intereſt, hope, and fear, is intitled to the conſideration and eſteem of mankind; nor is it exceeded in labour and difficulty by other profeſſions. The pulpit diſcourſes of the Clergyman require extenſive reading, mature reflexion, enlarged ſentiment, and no inferior degree of ingenuity and talents. And is it an eaſy enterprize to keep a perpetual guard and watch upon all his thoughts, words, actions; conſtantly to exert his utmoſt endeavours to make reaſon and conſcience the rule of his conduct; to keep in ſub-

jection all his irregular appetites; never to be tranſported by paſſion, or by reſentment; to be always ſuperior to the temptations of pleaſure and of intereſt; to practiſe what he teaches; to be able to hold himſelf out as a model to his fellow-citizens; in ſhort, to conſider himſelf as a choſen and ſelected inſtrument in the hands of Providence, peculiarly deſtined to promote the happineſs and ſalvation of mankind? Such at leaſt ought to be the manners, ſuch the views, ſuch the end of the life of a Clergyman, of a private and public teacher of religion and virtue.

CHAP. IV.

Of ſome Particulars reſpecting Candidates for Holy Orders.

THOUGH good morals, capacity, and learning, be the chief requiſites in ſuch as offer themſelves for Holy Orders;

ders; yet, as it is the nature of man to be greatly affected by external appearance and adventitious advantages, theſe ſhould by no means be neglected or overlooked. The legiſlator of the Jews ſeems to have paid a particular regard to circumſtances of this nature. Among many other particulars, well worthy of attention, even lameneſs and deformity excluded from the prieſthood [*c*]. In Egypt and India too, as well as in Judæa, none but particular perſons and families officiated in holy things:—"accitoſque pontifices "percunctatus eſt, num id precibus Agrip-"pinæ, aut minis tribuiſſent. Et illi "quidem quamquam abnuerent, modice "perſtricti *(etenim pars magna è propin-"quis ipſius, aut primores civitatis erant)*," &c. [*d*]. Among the Greeks and Romans the care of religion was committed to the nobleſt houſes, and principal perſons

[*c*] Herodotus, lib. ii. Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. Strabo, lib. xvii.

[*d*] Tacitus, lib. iv. c. 17. ed. Gronov. 8vo.

and magiſtrates of the ſtate. In ſcripture we find the Deity repreſented as offended at thoſe princes who raiſed to the prieſthood the loweſt of the people. Even the authors of ideal commonwealths have approved this ſtrain of policy. Plato [*e*], in his books of laws, admits none to the prieſthood who is illegitimate, or branded by any vice or crime, or whoſe parents lie under any infamous or diſhonourable imputation. Cicero [*f*], in his Treatiſe de Legibus, and Ariſtotle, in his Politics, give into the ſame ſentiments. Perhaps a more diligent attention to ſome of theſe circumſtances might be of ſome efficacy, in reviving the declining influence of the Clergy, and conſequently of piety and morality.

[*e*] Plato, de Legibus, lib. vi.

[*f*] Lib. ii. — ȣτε γεωργον, ȣτε βαναυσον ἱερεα κατα ςατεον ὑπο γαρ των παντων πρεπει τιμασθαι τȣς θεȣς. Ariſt. Pol. vii. c. 9.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Of the Views, Education, and Studies, of the Clergy.

IT being the peculiar duty and office of the Eccleſiaſtical Order to inſtruct mankind in virtue, and rouze them to the practice of it; and as theſe laudable ends are not to be attained without a conſiderable degree of learning and knowledge, too great care cannot be taken of their inſtruction in the younger part of life, and afterwards in pointing out to them a plan for their future ſtudies.

[*g*] When therefore, young man, you have made a ſuitable proficiency in the learned

[*g*] The above plan of ſtudy is intended to form not only a moral, Chriſtian preacher, but alſo to qualify thoſe who may riſe to perferment in the church, to bear an active and uſeful part in the commonwealth, and to clear them, among other imputations, from that of even their great friend, Lord Clarendon,

learned languages, and in thoſe of France and Italy (for without the latter the following plan cannot be purſued); let me exhort you to begin your ſtudies anew. But firſt well examine your own heart, and maturely conſider with what views and intentions you are going to take upon you the character of a paſtor, or public teacher of virtue. If Plutarch [*b*] cautions the ſtateſman, that he muſt not deſire to be employed in the conduct of public affairs with a view to private intereſt, to riches, to fame, or for want of ſomewhat to occupy his mind; with how much better reaſon may I ſuggeſt to you, that neither the hopes of encreaſing your patrimony, nor the love of an indolent and inactive life, ought to engage you in this moſt uſeful and honourable of pro-

who ſomewhere in his Life makes this ſevere reflexion, "that Clergymen underſtand the leaſt, and take the "worſt meaſure of human affairs, of all mankind that "can read and write."—The perſon addreſſed is ſuppoſed near the age of admiſſion to deacons orders.

[*b*] Precepta gerendæ reipublicæ.

feſſions;

ſeſſions; but principally the love of virtue, and of mankind, a warm concern for the welfare of your fellow-citizens, and an earneſt deſire to obtain the favour and approbation of that benevolent Being, to whom we owe exiſtence and happineſs. Notwithſtanding, as the weakneſs and imperfection of our nature muſt never be forgotten, I ſhould think you may be very reaſonably allowed to flatter yourſelf that your laudable intentions, your piety, your learning, your labours and example, may intitle you to preferment, to the endearments of a family, and to the means of ſettling them comfortably and reputably in the world. Thoſe who dedicate their lives, ſtudies, talents, principally to the benefit of the commonwealth, do not ſurely forfeit all the merit of their conduct, when they hope for ſome degree of recompence; and it would be equally impolitick and unjuſt, to confine the rewards of virtue to what it may be intitled to in a future life. Put

on then the habit of your order, chiefly indeed with a view to the advantage of others, yet not without ſome regard to your own. Aſpire principally to benefit others; but remember alſo, that you may become an huſband, a parent, a maſter of a family; in ſhort, do not ſuffer fanaticiſm, or a miſtaken piety, ſo far to tranſport you, as to make you forget, that when you become a Paſtor, you ſtill continue to be a man. When you find that your purpoſes are ſo praiſe-worthy, your views ſo moderate and rational—

Begin your ſtudies with the diligent peruſal of the Holy Scriptures; the rule of our faith and practice, the revelation of the Deity himſelf to the human race. There you will find the nobleſt views of Nature and Providence; the beſt precepts for the conduct of life and manners; "therein (to uſe the juſt eulogy of the "illuſtrious Mr. Locke) are contained "the words of eternal life; it has God "for its author, ſalvation for its end,

"and

"and truth without any mixture of error "for its matter [*i*]." Not only read therefore, but ſtudy theſe holy volumes: conſider them in the original, inveſtigate their ſenſe by the modeſt and cautious exertion of your own underſtanding. Father Simon will give you the various revolutions of their hiſtory. Let Joſephus, the Antiquités Judaïques of Baſnage, and Les Meurs des Iſraëlites of Fleury, be your commentary on the Old Teſtament; when doubtful and at a loſs on the New Teſtament, Clarke, Locke, Le Clerc, Hammond, will afford you a faithful and ſatisfactory interpretation. You may then proceed to Eccleſiaſtical hiſtory. Moſheim's abridgement is a ſenſible, and generally a candid, work. You may alſo read, in part at leaſt, the excellent larger hiſtories of Fleury and Baſnage. There is likewiſe a very amiable and ſtimulating picture of the manners of primitive Chriſti-

[*i*] Works, vol. iv. 4to edit.

anity

anity in the Meurs des Chretiens of the former [k]. Beauſobre's Hiſtoire de Manichée, and du Manichéiſme is equally entertaining and profound. We are indebted to M. Lenfant for an admirable relation of the councils of Piſa, of Conſtance, of Baſle, ſo formidable to the pretenſions and domination of Antichriſt. You can hardly read too often the account of the laſt famous council at Trent, by that great hiſtorian and politician Father Paul. The principal ſubject of the work is important and intereſting, the digreſſions full of curious reſearches, the reflections, though poignant and ſevere, yet generally as candid as juſt. Interwoven through it, you will learn, with equal aſtoniſhment and indignation, the various artifices and devices of the Roman-catholic Hierarchy, to increaſe and preſerve their temporal influence; and to

[k] Barberac, de la Morale des Peres, will give you ſome idea of the ſo much boaſted merit of thoſe venerable ſages.

bewilder and confound the underſtandings of men. With regard to the council itſelf, as the author informs us, its fate was very ſingular. "Deſired [*l*] and procured in order to reunite the church, in which diviſion and animoſity began to prevail; it gave ſuch a ſtability to hereſy and ſchiſm, and ſo exaſperated the parties, that their differences are become totally irreconcileable: conducted by the

[*l*] —"deſiderato, et procurato dagli huomini pii, "per riunire la Chieſa, che comminciava a dividerſi, "ha coſi ſtabilito lo ſciſma (it is a Catholic that "ſpeaks), et oſtinate le parti, che a fatto le diſcordie "irreconciliabili: et maneggiato da li Principi, per "reforma dell' ordini Eccleſiaſtico, ha cauſato la "maggior deformatione che ſia mai ſtatæ da che vive "il nome Chriſtiano: et dalli Veſcovi ſperato per "racquiſtar l'autorità epiſcopale, paſſato in gran parte "nel ſolo Pontefice Romano, l'ha fatta loro perdere "tutta intieramente, riducendoli à maggior ſervitù. "Nel contrario, temuto et ſfuggito dalla Corte di "Roma, come efficace mezo per moderare l'ef-"ſorbitante potenza, da piccioli principii pervinuta "con varii progreſſi ad un eccesſo illimitato, glie l'ha "talmente ſtaiblita et confermata ſopra la parte "reſtatale ſoggetta, che non fu mai tanta, ne coſi "ben radicata." Fra. Paolo, lib. i.

different

different princes of Europe for the ſake of the reformation of the Eccleſiaſtical Order; it has introduced greater depravity and diſſolution than ever prevailed ſince the firſt origin of Chriſtianity: earneſtly hoped for by the biſhops, with a view to recover their epiſcopal authority, in a great meaſure uſurped and ſolely centered in the biſhop of Rome; it has occaſioned their entire loſs of it, and reduced them to a more abject ſtate of ſervitude. On the contrary, feared and avoided by the court of Rome, as the moſt effectual means of moderating its exorbitant power, from an inconſiderable commencement arrived in length of time to an unlimited exceſs; it has eſtabliſhed and confirmed it in ſuch a manner over the party continuing in enthralment, that it never was ſo great, or ſo deeply rooted." Such was the origin, ſuch the deliberations, ſuch the concluſion, of a council deſcribed and painted to us by one of the moſt virtuous, learned, and

extra-

extraordinary perſons of the laſt century.

As, till the happy æra of the Reformation, the Roman pontifs were the principal actors both in civil and eccleſiaſtical affairs; and as all Europe derived their religious and moral notions from their ſuggeſtions and influence, and the practice of the Italian Clergy; their characters, manners, and conduct, deſerve your particular attention. The above-mentioned authors throw great light on theſe particulars, as likewiſe the learned Muratori's Annali d'Italia, and laborious collections, with Sigonius, the Pagi, Papebrock, &c. In all of them you will perceive, with indignation and ſorrow, how ſoon religion, in the hands of her viſible head, of her moſt dignified miniſters and doctors, began to degenerate, from her original ſimplicity and purity, into the moſt contemptible mummery, and vileſt ſuperſtition. You will obſerve the power of the pretended ſucceſſors of St. Peter proceed,

by

by degrees, from feeble beginnings to a boundleſs exorbitancy. You will ſee how ſoon they forgot the humility and the maxims of their Divine Maſter; "how [m] ſoon,

[m] — "depoſta a poco a poco la memoria della ſa-
" lute delle anime, e di precetti devini, e voltati tutti
" i penſieri lora alla grandezza mundana, ne uſando
" piu l'autorita ſpirituale, ſe non per inſtrumento e
" miniſterio della temporale, cominciarono a parere
" piuttoſto principi ſecolari, che pontefici, et comin-
" ciarono ad eſſere le cure et i negotii loro non piu
" la ſantita della vita, non piu l'augmento della reli-
" gione, non piu il zelo, e la carità verſo il proſ-
" ſimo, ma eſerciti, ma guerre contra à Chriſtiani,
" trattendo co' penſieri, e con le mani ſanguinoſe i
" ſacrificii; ma accumulare di teſoro nuove legi,
" nuove arti, nuove inſidie per raccorre da ogni parte
" danari, uſare a queſto fine ſenza riſpetto l'arme
" ſpirituali, vendere a queſto fine ſenza vergogna le
" coſe ſacre, e profane: le ricchezze diffuſe in loro et
" in tutta la corte, ſequitarono le pompe, il luſſo et i
" coſtumi inoneſti, le libidini et i piaceri abomi-
" nevoli; neſſuna cura a ſucceſſori, neſſun pen-
" ſiero della maeſta perpetua del Ponteficato; ma in
" luago di queſto, deſiderio ambigioſo e peſtifero di
" coaltare non ſolamente a ricchezze immoderate,
" ma a principati, a regni, e figliaoli, e nepoti, e
" congiunti loro, non diſtribuendo piu le dignita, e
" gli emolumenti ne gli huomini benemeriti e vir-
" tuoſi,

ſoon, relinquiſhing the care of the ſalvation of ſouls, and of the precepts of the goſpel, they bent all their thoughts and views to the acquiſition of worldly grandeur, ſtraining their ſpiritual power ſolely to increaſe their temporal influence; and affecting rather the character and appearance of ſecular princes than that of the principal miniſters of an order of men, whoſe peculiar office it is to inſtruct mankind in the duties of religion and virtue: how ſoon their chief care and concern began to be no longer ſanctity of life, no longer the progreſs of religion, no longer zeal and charity; but armies, but wars againſt fellow-chriſtians, polluting with bloody thoughts and hands the elements of the holy ſacrament; but the accumulation of treaſure,

" tuoſi, ma quaſi ſempre o vendendoſi al prezzo mag-
" giore, o diſſepandoſi in perſone opportune all' am-
" bizioni, all' avarizia, o alle vergognoſe volupta."

Caſtrated paſſage of the fourth book of Guicciardini.

new

new laws, new arts, new devices, in order to extort money from every quarter; to this purpoſe ſpiritual arms uſed without ſcruple, things profane and ſacred indiſcriminately venal; themſelves, their relations, their whole court, wallowing in riches, abandoned to oſtentation, to luxury, to infamous pleaſures and abominable luſts; no regard to the ſacredneſs of their character, to the morals of their brethren, but an ambitious deſire of exalting not only to exorbitant wealth, but to principalities, to kingdoms, their ſons, their nephews, their kinſmen; no longer conferring dignities and emoluments on perſons of merit and virtue, but in a manner ever ſelling them to the higheſt bidder, or proſtituting them on perſons uſeful to them in their ambitious, mercenary, or ſenſual purſuits." But let us turn away our eyes from this odious picture, and a little conſider thoſe ſtudies, and thoſe authors, whoſe ſentiments and reflexions, whoſe powers of imagination,

expreſſion,

expreſſion, and elocution, may enable you to diſcharge with propriety and ſucceſs the office of a public teacher of morality and piety, of an active and uſeful citizen of the commonwealth [*n*].

As we derive all our knowledge, with the art of writing, from the antients; theſe are the ſources from which we muſt draw. They made an aſtoniſhing progreſs in all the different branches of ſcience, but particularly in that of morality. Plato is the firſt writer, come down to us, on this moſt ſublime and uſeful part of knowledge. His merit is, undoubtedly, great in many reſpects; yet, if I dared to ſay it, if it be not too great preſumption, if I incur not the imputation of a vain ſingularity, and a diſre-

[*n*] I forgot to mention before, in his place, Hooker's immortal Treatiſe of Eccleſiaſtical Polity: a rational, learned, and noble defence of our preſent church-eſtabliſhment. Indeed there are ſome things, which, had he written in the preſent times, perhaps, he would not have thought it neceſſary ſo much to inſiſt on.

ſpect of the opinion of better judges; I muſt confeſs, I cannot help being ſometimes ſurpriſed at the great admiration (bordering even on idolatry) in which this divine philoſopher has been generally held, both by the antients and moderns. Certainly it is nature that ſpeaks in all his writings; his ſtyle is chaſte and flowing, yet not perhaps the emblem of a rapid impetuous river, as ſome would repreſent it; his characters are admirably ſupported, the ſcenery of his dialogues (he uſed no other ſort of compoſition) is often pictureſque and beautiful, the circumſtances natural, the plan of them ingenious:—But do not they often rather amuſe than inſtruct? how little information do even the longeſt of them contain? not to mention the unconnected digreſſions, the contrary opinions, the extravagant fables! It muſt be acknowledged, that ſome very important and intereſting truths are aſſerted and proved after his manner; the being of a God,

his

his perfect and immutable nature, his love of virtue, his hatred of vice, the immortality of the ſoul, a future ſtate of rewards and puniſhments. Theſe he learned, either from the philoſophers who preceded him, or from his converſations with the Pythagoreans of his time, and the Ægyptian prieſts. They are ſcattered and enforced through various parts of his writings, yet generally by arguments and tales, that would not ſeem very ſatisfactory or concluſive in the mouth of a modern philoſopher. The dialogues againſt the ſophiſts (rivals for influence with the philoſophers) ſeem prolix and tireſome: they expoſe, indeed, the futility and emptineſs of the learning and pretenſions of that oſtentatious and uſeleſs tribe of men. Of the others, the beſt are the Apology, the Crito, the Phædo, the Banquet, the Georgias, the Second Alcibiades, the Phœdrus, the Regnum. Yet even in theſe, only particular paſſages appear ſingularly ſtriking

and intereſting: if one may uſe ſo homely and trite a compariſon, ſome would even have the hardineſs to ſay, that the ſhell is very large and ample; but the kernel, the ſubſtance, comparatively inconſiderable and ſmall. His books of Laws and Republic are the moſt profound and uſeful of his works, and have been of infinite convenience to all ſucceeding writers on the origin, nature, and end, of all political inſtitutions. The three laſt books of the Republic eſpecially deſerve particular attention. Nothing can be more ingeniouſly eloquent, than the manner in which he accounts for the change of the different forms of government one into another, and his portraits of the regal, tyrannical, ariſtocratical, and democratical characters. I am far from intending a formal criticiſm on the authors recommended; I give but a liſt of their names.—Though Ariſtotle be not ſo pleaſing a writer as Plato, yet all his works bear the characters of a penetrating,

ing, a maſculine, a capacious, and ſoaring underſtanding. His Poetics, with Longinus, will form your taſte in poetry. The chapters in his Ethics, on Liberality, Magnificence, and Generoſity, and the eighth and ninth books on Friendſhip, will ſerve ſtill more to indear to you thoſe diſintereſted and amiable virtues. You will learn, from his ſentiments of the cauſes of ſedition, and of the ſubverſion of ſtates, in his Politics, to reſpect thoſe princes who make the laws and the public good the rule of their conduct, and the end of their inſtitution; to love our own excellent form of government, and to endeavour to preſerve it. In his Rhetoric, the ſections on the paſſions, and the various conditions of men, will ſhew you the great influence of ſituation and circumſtances on the rational character, and what are the motives that operate moſt powerfully on the human mind. Need I mention Xenophon and Plutarch, the moſt uſeful, the moſt inſtructing, the

moſt entertaining authors of Antiquity. The philoſophical writings of Cicero, notwithſtanding his logical and abſtracted way of reaſoning, contain many golden paſſages. His treatiſes of Offices, of Friendſhip, and of Old Age, are, as Pliny ſays, not only to be read, but to be got by heart. When you read Seneca, Epictetus, Antoninus the great and good, you will think more highly of our own nature, and *burn* to reſemble the divine. The elegant and pictureſque pencil of La Bruyere, will ſhew you the manners and ſentiments of thoſe we daily live and converſe with. Paſcal and Nicole are pious and eloquent moraliſts. The reflexions of the thoughtful, the feeling, the humane Wollaſton, on Providence, and on truths relating to individuals, will illuſtrate and prove to you in a very different manner all that has been conjectured by the antients on the moſt important queſtions of natural religion and morality.

morality [o]. Locke is as the founder of juſt and rational Metaphyſics. The Treatiſe of Civil Government of the ſame great man, with Sidney and Monteſquieu, have ſupplied every thing that was wanting in Plato and Ariſtotle on the nature of Political Inſtitutions [p]. Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon, with Diodorus Siculus, will give you all the Greek Hiſtory. In your ſtudy of that of Rome, you will be equally pleaſed with the profound copiouſneſs of Dionyſius Halicarnaſſenſis, and the eloquent brevity of Livy. Then come the precious remains of a Polybius, of a Salluſt, of a Tacitus, with Cæſar the hiſtorian of nature. Appian, Herodian, Dio Caſſius,

[o] Let me alſo add the admirable and ſublime moral Eſſays of that great benefactor to Engliſh literature Dr. Johnſon, to whom we are indebted for the nobleſt Dictionary of any language.

[p] Dr. Fergusſon, of the univerſity of Edinburgh, has lately obliged us with a very ingenious and eloquent Eſſay on Politics, written in the very ſpirit of Monteſquieu.

A. Marcellinus, though inferior in the art of writing, are valuable and worthy of peruſal, upon account of the facts and information they contain. I ſhall ſay nothing of the diſſenſion, deſolation, and ruin that enſued, till the total ſubverſion of this empire; nor of the tumultuous and bloody hiſtory of the Eaſtern. After a long ſeries of tyranny, horror, and anarchy, you will ſee the genius of civil wiſdom in affairs, with the preciſion of Thucydides and eloquence of Tacitus in compoſition, begin as it were to revive and awake from their iron ſlumber in Machiavel and Guicciardini. Davila will give you a manly and ſenſible relation of the calamities and miſeries of France, under her weak, or bigoted, or frantic princes. The great merit of Thuanus and Sully is univerſally known. Though you will not approve Bentivoglio's partiality, though you will tire over his ſieges, though you will ſeek in vain

vain for the friend of religous toleration, and of the common and unalienable rights of mankind; yet you will be pleaſed with the ſimplicity of his ſtyle, and the approaches to antient eloquence and good ſenſe in his narration and ſpeeches. With regard to our own hiſtory, it is your duty on every account to make a particular ſtudy of it. The foreigner Rapin, though no painter, though in him are no pointed reflexions, no highly-coloured portraits, yet (and it was the opinion of the late Mr. Gray, peculiarly learned in Engliſh hiſtory) you will find him a faithful and candid guide [q]. Nor ought the poets to be neglected by you. They will afford you an agreeable change and relaxation after your more ſerious ſtudies, give a richneſs and ſplendor to your ſtyle; and,

[q] It is needleſs to mention the univerſally acknowledged merit of the hiſtories of Mr. Hume and of Dr. Robertſon, in which are united depth of reflexion, and an intereſting relation of facts.

what

what is ſtill more to their praiſe, they often inculcate a purer moral than profeſſed and formal treatiſes of Ethics. Of theſe pleaſing painters of nature, ſentiment, and paſſion, of theſe amiable encouragers to virtue, you may confine yourſelf among the Greeks to Homer, Heſiod, Sophocles, and Euripides. Among the Romans, to Terence, Virgil, and Horace. Nor is modern Europe inferior in the number or excellence of theſe enticing inſtructors, either to ancient Italy or Greece. For who does not read with rapture Spenſer, Shakeſpeare, Milton, Dryden, Pope?—In Arioſto and Taſſo, we are indebted to Italy for two of the nobleſt and moſt original poets in the world. France, in a manner, challenges and inſults over us with her Corneille, Racine, Moliere, La Fontaine. The ſevere and ſublime eloquence of Demoſthenes, the florid copiouſneſs, learning, and variety of Cicero, who ſpoke to a people of a leſs refined

taſte,

taſte, the dialectic of Boſſuet, the pathos of Meſſilion, will leave you at no loſs with regard to the form, compoſition, and matter of your public diſcourſes. You cannot be ignorant, that the beſt of our own Sermon-writers are Barrow, Tillotſon, and Clarke; their ſucceſſors having done little more than repeat in different language, the reflexions and ſentiments of theſe great and good men. Nor need you be told that we are indebted to the latter, and to biſhop Butler, for the moſt moderate and ſenſible defence of natural and revealed religion.

The beſt Voyages and Travels (Provoſt will direct you to the original authors) will ſerve perhaps, as much as any branch of ſtudy, to enlighten and enlarge your underſtanding. If you acquire a taſte for Natural Hiſtory (and if you do not, you will forego a part of ſcience, in which no where the veſtiges of the Parent and Governor of the univerſe are ſo palpable and legible), the learned Buffon, the ri-

val

val of Plato and Lucretius, who has diffuſed over his work that nobleneſs and elevation of ſtyle ſo well adapted to philoſophical ſubjects, will either ſatisfy your curioſity, or refer you to ſources that can never be exhauſted. Thus I have opened an ample field of inſtruction and entertainment to you. Enter it chearfully and with alacrity; and take it on the authority of one who has made the experiment, that the game you ſpring here (to purſue the metaphor) will contribute more than any occupation or amuſement, except the offices of piety and humanity, to render this temporal pilgrimage ſupportable, till you are advanced to an happier and eternal exiſtence.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Style of the Pulpit.

THE diſcourſes of the Clergy ſhould be adapted to the circumſtances and apprehenſions of their audience. One would not addreſs the ſame ſentiments and arguments to the pariſhioners of St. James, and of St. Paul's, of the neighbourhood of the Exchange, and of Wapping, of a country village, and of a large trading town. Their education, their views, their manner of life, ſo greatly varying, different motives and reflexions ſeem neceſſary, in order to convince their underſtandings, or intereſt their paſſions. The vices and even virtues of the great are of another ſpecies than thoſe of the middle gentry, of the trading part of the community, or of ſuch as follow agriculture, or handicraft. To the former, the fatal conſequences of vicious ambition,

ambition, of exceſs in pleaſure, the baſeneſs and criminality of a preference of private to publick good, the unworthineſs and wickedneſs of arrogance and inhumanity, ſhould be expoſed and reprobated; to the latter, it ſeems ſufficient to inculcate the virtues of induſtry, of ſobriety, of honeſty. Though it would be almoſt ridiculous to caution a perſon of education and property, that he muſt not lie, that he muſt not pilfer, or get intoxicated with ale or Engliſh ſpirits; yet ſuch language might be uſed with propriety enough to a ſhopkeeper, an handicraft, or labourer. Theſe are the vices of the condition of ſuch inferior people, and to which they are moſt liable; owing to their breeding, and to the little ſhame with which ſuch meanneſſes and exceſſes are attended among their equals. To the perſon of moderate fortune, we may recommend it, to bound his expences by his income, to make a ſuitable proviſion for his children, to treat his dependents

pendents and domeſtics with gentleneſs and even kindneſs; but the ſame ſtyle of inſtruction would be highly abſurd to a handicraft, a huſbandman, or menial ſervant, whoſe wages or earnings of to-day will hardly ſupply him with the ſubſiſtence of to-morrow, who can leave his children nothing but his craft, his ſpade, or his mattock, and who, inſtead of having inferiors to wait upon him, is the ſlave of a maſter, or of the ſoil. In the ſame manner, want of occupation and of ſome worthy purſuit, pernicious reading, uninterrupted proſperity, temptation from pleaſure or intereſt, ſeducing perſons of high ſtation, or great property, to doubt, or call in queſtion, the moſt ſacred and important truths both of Morality and Revelation, the reality of virtue, the divinity of our Redeemer, the certainty of a future retribution, and, in the higheſt paroxyſms of their folly and madneſs, even the being of a God—theſe eſſential and ſalutary points of

faith and practice ought to be often enforced to them by all the recommendations of imagination and argument. But to the middle and inferior orders of men, such exertion and pains appear less requisite. To assert, to paint the former truths, seems sufficient; to prove them by a series of argument and reasoning, to state objections, to refute them, would sometimes, perhaps, be rather detrimental than beneficial. The moderation of the condition, and the daily occupations of the middle and inferior class of people, neither afford them the leisure, nor hold out sufficient temptations to them, to give into such sentiments of impiety and irreligion. On the contrary, their firm persuasion and belief of the divine truths of Morality and Revelation is often their chief consolation in this life. Indeed, what other refuge have they to fly to, when unsuccessful in their occupations and callings, when suffering under oppression, under sickness, under poverty?

verty? What elſe can prevent their envy and diſcontent, when they compare their unequal lot with the inſulting happineſs of the rich and fortunate! The latter, on the contrary, have often great reaſon to fear, leſt to them the change ſhould be only for the worſe.

So pathetically juſt is the reflexion of the Son of Sirach!

"O death, acceptable is thy ſentence unto the needy, and unto him whoſe ſtrength faileth, that is now in the laſt age, and is vexed with all things, and to him that deſpaireth, and hath loſt patience!

"O death, how bitter is the remembrance of thee to a man that liveth at reſt in his poſſeſſions, unto the man that hath nothing to vex him, and that hath proſperity in all things!"

Hence, perhaps, one might infer, that the calm and ingenious reaſoning of

Clarke or Sherlock is the proper ſtyle of diſcourſe to a polite audience; the primitive and ingenious piety of Tillotſon to one of the middle rank of people; the figurative and declamatory manner of Barrow to a popular and mixt aſſembly: ſuch ſeems to be the character of the ſtyle and manner of theſe great Moraliſts and Divines, though not ſtrictly applicable to ſeveral of their particular diſcourſes.

Notwithſtanding the good ſenſe and learning of our Sermon-writers, our neighbours of France ſeem greatly to have excelled us in the elegant and animated ſtyle of their pulpit-diſcourſes. Who of our Divines come near the flowing, the rapid, the pathetick eloquence of Meſſilion, the manly, the alarming, the evangelical rhetoric of Bourdaloue! Do we feel much compunction, or remorſe; are we impatient to practiſe the morality of Clarke? Do we never tire of the diviſions and ſubdiviſions of Tillotſon; or does

does his manner never appear to us careleſs, or ſlovenly, without nerves, or preciſion? Are we never diſguſted with the coarſe metaphors, with the low and vulgar phraſes, of Barrow? None of theſe imperfections of ſtyle and manner can be imputed to the polite and eloquent writers above-mentioned. They are ſometimes declamatory (which, after all, conſidering that many audiences conſiſt of people of all ranks and conditions, is the beſt general ſtyle for the lectures of the Clergy), but never ſlovenly, tireſome, or vulgar.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Decline of the Influence of the Clergy, and of the Progreſs of Infidelity.

I CANNOT think the decline of the influence of this uſeful order of men, and of the credit of revelation, owing ſolely to the corruption of the age.

We know [r] from hiſtory, that both were even greateſt when Europe appeared to be in all kinds of depravity and diſſolution. This melancholy ſtate of the world muſt be principally attributed to the licentiouſneſs, venality, and ambition, of the court of Rome, and of the Italian Clergy. As it was hinted above, they ſet an ill example; they ſeemed to have nothing in view but their own temporal intereſt and aggrandizement; their

[r] Machiavel, in relating the aſſaſſination of the cruel and libidinous Duke of Milan, ſays, "Ne "quello potette altro fare o dire che cadendo una "volta ſola della noſtra Donna in ſuo ajuto chia-"mare." Lib. vii. in the year 1476.—That execrable tyrant Henry the Eighth preſſed Cranmer's hand, intimating that he died in the faith of Chriſt: and later ſtill the laſcivious, mean-ſpirited, and inglorious Charles the Second (or, according to Barillon, the Duke of York) ſaid to Huddleſton, when he adminiſtered the Sacrament to him almoſt in the agony of death, "That he had ſaved him twice, firſt his "body, and now his ſoul." Notwithſtanding the immoral lives and pernicious views of theſe unworthy princes, they were all of them ſincere believers. How they reconciled their faith and their practice, their confeſſors beſt know.

external

external appearance was gaudy, aſſuming, and oſtentatious; their revenues, and the greater part of their time, was paſſed in the moſt criminal and ſhameful exceſſes [s]. Inſtead of inculcating the divine precepts of the Goſpel, inſtead of making religion conſiſt in the conſcientious practice of the virtues of piety, of juſtice, of temperance, their whole attention was directed

[s] "Bonus Chriſtianus eſt, qui ad eccleſiam frequenter venit, et oblationem, qui in altari Deo offeratur, exhibet; qui de fructibus ſuis non guſtat, niſi prius Deo aliquid offerat: qui quoties ſanctæ ceremoniæ advenerit, ante dies plures caſtitatem etiam cum propria uxore cuſtodit ut ſecura, conſcientia Domini altare accidere poſſit; qui poſtremo ſymbolum vel orationem Domini memoriter tenet.—Redimite animas veſtras de pœna, dum habetis in poteſtate remedia—oblationes et decimas eccleſiis offerte—luminaria ſanctis locis, juxta quod habetis, exhibite—ad eccleſiam quoque frequentias convenite; ſanctorum patrocinia humiliter expetite—quod ſi obſervaveritis, ſecuri in die judicii ante tribunal æterni judicii venientes dicetis: da, Domine, quia dedimus." St. Elegius, in Dr. Maclaine's valuable Tranſlation of Moſheim.—Such were the ideas of Religion and Piety inculcated by the Clergy of the ſeventh century!

to ſeduce the laity into the belief that the only and moſt efficacious method to obtain the favour and protection of Providence was, by an implicit obedience to his more immediate ſervants, by donations to the church, by an exact repetition of certain forms of prayer, by addreſſes to the ſaints, by a ſcrupulous obſervance of rites and ceremonies: good morals, all the uſeful and amiable virtues of humanity were intirely overlooked by them, were leaſt of all things their concern [*t*]. The viſible heads of the church, they who affected the character of the vicars, ſucceſſors, or repreſentatives, of our Divine Redeemer, were more profligate and infamous and abandoned in their manners and conduct, than even the lay-princes their cotemporaries. Notwithſtanding this deplorable and ſhameful cor-

[*t*] "Habbiamo adunque con la Chieſa et co i "Preti Italiani queſto primo obligo d'eſſere diven-"tati ſenza religione et cattivi." Machiavelli. Diſcorſi, l. i, c. 12.

ruption

ruption and depravity in the miniſters of religion, the ignorance and ſuperſtition of the people ſtill looked up with reverence and an awful terror to the Clergy in general. Both the higher and inferior orders of men being unacquainted with letters, and conſequently incapable of reading thoſe holy volumes in which are contained the true principles of Chriſtian Religion, they were obliged to adopt as ſuch the ſuggeſtions of their authoriſed inſtructors, who took care to inculcate a ſyſtem of belief, ſolely calculated to increaſe their own conſideration, and to make themſelves conſidered as the only ſucceſsful mediators between ſinful men and an offended Deity. At different periods indeed, ſeveral pious and diſcerning ſpirits ſaw through this monſtrous treachery and groſs abuſe of human underſtanding; but with little advantage to the Chriſtian world, and generally with their own ruin, till Luther aroſe. The private exhortations, the pub-

lic diſcourſes, the writings of this extraordinary perſonage, his tranſlation of the ſcriptures, the invention of the art of printing, the conſequent revival and progreſs of ſcience, &c. &c. all contributed to diſabuſe and inform the laity, and to give them a truē and juſt idea of Chriſtian Religion and of Eccleſiaſtical Power. From this happy period and revolution, at leaſt in Proteſtant countries, the influence of the Clergy, and their ſucceſs in humanizing and reforming the manners of Europe, aroſe from the doctrines and morals they inculcated and illuſtrated both in theory and practice. But as good and evil are ever blended in this mutable, imperfect, and tranſitory eſtate, ſo it happened in the preſent inſtance. The invention of printing multiplied books, theſe multiplied readers, ſtudy became faſhionable, and another road to reſpect and conſideration. Henceforth, learning was no longer confined to the Clergy, but, gradually diffuſing itſelf,

produced

produced as it were a new order in the commonwealth, rivals, and competitors with the Clergy for influence and conſideration among the people. The credit of the latter, with that of both natural and revealed religion, had even been attacked before, by the followers of Ariſtotle and of Averroes (in the thirteenth century), but with little ſucceſs; the tranſition being too daring and violent from the extreme of ſuperſtition to that of infidelity and atheiſm. Theſe vain and audacious wretches aſſumed the name of Philoſophers. Some centuries afterwards, the ſucceſs of the Reformers, againſt the uſurpations and impoſitions of Popery, and the riſe of a middle order of men in the principal ſtates of Europe by the overthrow of the tyranny of the nobility and the progreſs of commerce, encreaſed their number and encouraged their attempts [u]. Their daggers

[u] The indirect enemies of Revelation are ſometimes taken, as it were, unawares, and forced by a kind

gers were pointed principally at the Holy Scriptures, at thoſe tenets and opinions we hold moſt eſſential to virtue and to

kind of irreſiſtible impulſe to bear teſtimony to the truth, and to condemn their own conduct.

" Mais ces vain et futiles declamateurs vont de tous " cotès armés de leurs funeſtes paradoxes, ſapant les " fondemens de la foi et anientiſſant la virtu. Ils " ſourient dedaigneuſement a ces viaux mots de " patrie et de religion, et conſacrent leurs talents et " leur philoſophie à detraire et avilir tout ce qu'il y a " de ſacré parmi les hommes; non qu'au fond ils " haiſſent ni la vertu, ni nos dogmes; c'eſt de l'opi- " nion public qu'ils ſont ennemis; et pour les " ramener aux pieds des autels, il ſuffiroit de les re- " liquer parmi les athes. O fureur de diſtinguer, " que ne pouvez-vous point ?—Le paganiſme, livré à " tous les egaremens de la raiſon humaine, a-t'il laiſſé " a la poſterité rien qu'on puiſſe comparer aux " monumens honteux que lui a preparer l'impri- " merie ſous le regne de l'evangile ? les ecrits impies " des Leucippis et des Diagoras ſont peris avec eux. " On n'avoit point encore inventé l'art d'eterniſer les " extravagances de l'éprit humain : mais graces aux " caracteres typographiques et à l'uſage que nous en " faiſons, les dangereuſes revêries des Hobbes et des " Spinoſa reſteront a jamais." Rouſſeau. Who could have thought that this eloquent cenſurer would, notwithſtanding, have afterwards obliged us with the Savoyard's Creed ? But O fureur de diſtinguer !

ſalvation.

ſalvation. Argument and reaſoning, wit and raillery, learning and criticiſm, every method was tried and practiſed, to ſap the foundations of deiſm and morality, to undermine the doctrines of the goſpel, to render ſuſpicious the divinity of our Saviour, to deliver wicked men from the fear of a future retribution, to exclude the Deity from his adminiſtration of the world, and to ſubſtitute in his place a thing they call Fate or Deſtiny. In this cenſure are included the impieties and blaſphemies of the minute philoſophers, both before and ſince the Reformation. Their attempts were moſt ſucceſsful in France and in England; yet Italy too can boaſt of her Pomponatius, of her Politian, of her Bruno, as well as Germany of Theophraſtus, Paracelſus, Taurellus, &c. In the following century, the Florentine Coſmo Rugeri died a ſacrifice to infidelity and atheiſm. The obſcene impiety of a Rabelais, the ſcepticiſm of a Montaigne, with Bodin, Dolet,

Des

Des Perieres, and others of forgotten fame, ſeduced the weak, or the ſenſual, among our neighbours of France. The writings of Spinoza were once much extolled by the lovers of innovation, and a ſeeming boldneſs of invention and inquiry; but are now deſervedly condemned to the ſame obſcurity with the metaphyſicks and philoſophy of his maſters Des Cartes and Ariſtotle. In our own country, the arbitrary conduct of our princes with regard to religion, during the tumultuous period of the Reformation, with the ſervile compliance of our Parliaments, Clergy, and People, ſeduced the learned but romantic and enthuſiaſtic Lord Herbert into a kind of deiſm and infidelity. Then appeared he who is called the philoſopher of Malmſbury, whoſe execrable writings are ſaid very juſtly to inculcate deſpotiſm in politics, and licentiouſneſs in morals; cloſe behind him followed the witty, the diſſolute, but repentant Rocheſter, and not long after the furious

Toland, the ſuicide Blount, with Tyndal, Woolſton, Morgan, Mandeville, &c. What pain does it give me, how much am I concerned, that not even the example, the admonitions, the writings, of the illuſtrious Mr. Locke, could defend his amiable and eloquent pupil Lord Shafteſbury, from the contagion and vanity of infidelity! but how great ſoever may be the merit of this noble writer in other reſpects, it is rendered vain, and even pernicious, by the poiſon with which it is contaminated, by the impious application of what he calls the teſt of truth to the divine revelation of the goſpel. The rear of this deluded or malevolent band, the votaries of vanity, ſenſuality, or impiety, is brought up by the great high-prieſt of infidelity, the arch-infidel Bolingbroke, equally the enemy of the moral attributes of his God, of his religion, and of his country. This reſpectable and meritorious combination of worthies, ſome indeed with

a far

a far inferior degree of guilt than others, ſtrained every nerve, called forth all the learning and talents they poſſeſſed, to tear up, in a manner, morality by the roots, by endeavouring to remove and beat down thoſe checks and reſtraints on the vices and crimes of men, which nature dictated, which wiſdom ſtrengthened and enforced, which God himſelf at length ſanctified and confirmed. The licentiouſneſs and corruption of the times gave a welcome reception, heard with raviſhed ears the ſuggeſtions of theſe voluntary enemies of the virtue and ſalvation of their fellow-citizens. The debauched, the venal, the unjuſt, flocked in crowds to their banner. They were tranſported to find and adopt a ſyſtem of belief, ſo favourable to their morals and to their lives. It was at leaſt ſome alleviation of their fears and apprehenſions, to be brought back to the uncertainties of gentiliſm with regard to a providence, a futurity, an eternal ſtate of happi-

happineſs for the virtuous, of miſery for the wicked. The authority of the reſtorers and patrons of this eaſy morality, was preferred to that of a Bacon, of a Newton, of a Locke [w]. Theſe great and

[w] Men of letters and genius did not always value themſelves on endeavouring to diſcredit opinions, which, though even doubtful (forgive the impiety of the expreſſion), are certainly of great uſe to give a ſanction to truths, on which depend all the bleſſings of ſociety. To the illuſtrious names juſt mentioned, let me add that of Petrarch, the greateſt poet and moſt learned perſon of the fourteenth century. His virtuous indignation againſt the infidels of his times, is very naturally painted in the following paſſage of one of his familiar letters. Not having his Works by me, I ſhall give it in the tranſlation of his late Biographer. It is an account of a converſation with one of theſe free-thinkers, or ſceptics :—" Je couſai, dit-il, avec lui dans ma bibliothe-
" que, et je m'aviſai je ne ſais à propos de quoi de
" citer quelques paſſages des livres ſaints. Il me dit
" en ecumant de rage et fronceant le ſoureil (for the
" infidel is ſometimes as furious in his zeal as the
" bigot), Gardez pour vous vos docteurs de l'Egliſe;
" pour moi, je ſais qui je dois ſuivre. Vous parlez,
" lui dis-je, comme l'Apoſtre St. Paul : il ſeroit à
" ſouhaiter que vous penſaſſiez comme lui. Votre
" St. Paul, me repondit-il, eſt un fol et un ſemeur
" de

and almoſt divine men were under the influence of prejudice, they wanted penetration,

" de paroles. Il eſt vrai, repris-je, que le ſemence " qu'il a jettée a bien reuſſi, cultivée par ſes ſucceſ- " ſeurs, arroſée du ſang des martyrs elle a produit " une moiſſon abondante. Alors il me dit avec un " rire moqueur et un air de pitie : Soyez bon Chre- " tien tant qu'il vous plaira, pour moi je ne crois rien " de tout cela. Votre Paul, votre Auguſtin, et tous " les autres que vous vantez, n'etoient que des " bavards. A ! ſi vous pouviez lire * Averroes ? " vous verriez combien il eſt ſuperieur à tous ces " gens la. J'avoue que ce blaſphême me mit en " fureur ; j'eus de la peine à me contenir. Allez, " lui dis-je avec colere, tenir ailleurs de pareils pro- " pos et le prenant par ſon manteau, je le mis dehors " plus rudement que mon charactere ne le comporte. " Il y a je ne ſais combien de gens de cette eſpece " dont rien ne peut reprimer l'audace ; ni le reſpect

* Averroes was born at Cordova, about the middle of the twelfth century. He was a pretender to univerſal learning. The works of Ariſtotle being about that time brought into Spain from Conſtantinople, in a tranſlation juſt then made hy the Arabians ; Averroes became a ſort of enthuſiaſt in his admiration of them, and illuſtrated them with his commentaries and obſervations. The Venetians, by means of their commercial intercourſe with the Saracens, introdnced both the one and the other into Italy. They were immediately tranſlated into Latin, and eagerly read by the ſmall philoſophers of the times. See a full account of the matter in the above-cited Memoires.

" dû

tration, in ſhort, they were weak and credulous. Such was the reaſoning, ſuch the concluſion, of the half-learned, the half-thinkers. Hence their obſtinacy in their licentious lives; hence their diſregard even of appearances; hence their neglect and ridicule of the private and public worſhip of the Deity. The increaſe of money, and the poor and inſufficient proviſion made for the inferior Clergy, may be conſidered as another cauſe of the decline of the influence and credit of virtue, revelation, and the prieſthood. In times of frugality and moderation, many of the ſubordinate mi-

" dû à Jeſus-Chriſt, ni la crainte des ſupplices; la " priſon, la feu, les inquiſiteurs armés; rien ne fait " impreſſion ſur eux. Voila, mon cher ami, quels " ſont les gens avec qui nous vivons, et qui nous " jugent. Voides de ſcience, ils ſont pleine de pre- " ſumption—avides des nouveautés, ils s'attachent " à de nouveaux docteurs, repandent des doctrines " nouvelles, et mepriſent tout ce qui eſt antient." See the curious and entertaining Memoires pour la vie de Petrarque, lib. v.

niſters of religion were in a capacity to live on a footing with the middle gentry or ſubſtantial yeomanry, bring up and educate their children decently, and ſettle them reputably in the world. But ſince the great tide of wealth and luxury that has been flowing into this country for a century paſt, their ſituation has undergone a conſiderable change. The middle rank of people in the kingdom is diminiſhing daily, property is running rapidly into the hands of the few, reſpect and conſideration is given to nothing but fortune; learning, probity, merit, are poor recommendations; in ſhort, the diſtance between the inferior and moſt numerous body of the Clergy, and the opulent laity, is wider than ever; their external appearance, their manner of living, even their ſentiments and converſation, bear no longer any reſemblance.

We may flatter ourſelves, and imagine, that piety and integrity will force eſteem

and

and reſpect in every period of ſociety; but we ſhall be too ſoon convinced, that to expect it in times of corruption and licentiouſneſs, without the aid of other advantages, is but ſimplicity and ignorance of mankind. And if we do not think with reſpect of the teacher, in what manner ſhall we receive his doctrine? Can we, indeed, believe that perſon qualified to inſtruct and admoniſh us, who has neither the requiſite foundation, the opportunities, or ſuitable tranquillity of mind? For what can be the leiſure of one who muſt maintain, educate, and ſettle the tendereſt connexions of nature; what his calmneſs and ſerenity, what his elevation of ſentiment and expreſſion, what his aſſiſtances from books, converſation, correſpondence!—But whence aroſe the influence of the Apoſtles, and of their immediate ſucceſſors? From the miraculous powers, the divine interpoſition, the fervour and zeal of the early converts to Chriſtianity. Whence that

of the Clergy of Chriſtendom till the Reformation [x]? To the ignorance of the laity, and to the ſpirit of Chriſtianity, ſo frequently attempted to be revived in the riſe and inſtitution of the various religious orders? Whence that of the Proteſtant and Reformed Clergy for ſome time after that period? To their exemplary conduct and manners, and to the

[x] "Ma quanto alle ſette, ſi vide ancora queſte "renovationi eſſe neceſſarie per l'eſſempio della noſtra "religione, la quale ſe non fuſſe ſtata ritirata verſo "il ſuo principio da ſan Franceſco et da ſan Domi- "nico farebbe al tutto ſpenta. Perche queſti con la "poverta et con l'eſſempio delle vita di Chriſto, la "riduſſone nella mente de gli huomini, che gia vi "era ſpenta; per et furono ſi potenti gli ordini loro "nuovi, che ei ſono cagione che la diſhoneſtà de "prelati et de capi della religione non la rovini, vi- "vendo ancora poveramente et havendo tanto cre- "dito nelle confeſſioni con i popoli et nelle predi- "cationi, ch'e danno loro ad intendere come egli "e male a dir male del male, et che ſia bene vivere "ſotto l'abbedienza loro et ſe fanno errori laſciargli "a Deo. Et coſi quelli fanno il peggio che poſſono, "perche non temono quella punitioni che non ven- "gono et non cridono. Ha adanque queſta renova- "tione mantenuto et mantieni queſta religione." Machiavelli. Diſcorſi, l. iii. c. 1.

general knowledge, as well as belief of the people, in the practical as well as ſpeculative tenets of the Holy Scriptures. May it not then be inferred, that the primary ſource, from whence all theſe waters of bitterneſs flow, is the ſucceſs of the retainers of infidelity, the conſequent increaſe of corruption in manners, the inſufficient proviſion made for the greater part of the miniſters of the eſtabliſhed religion? But, perhaps, it may be replied, if you have pointed out the evil, can you ſuggeſt the remedy. It muſt be evident to the moſt inattentive obſerver. Let the Clergy exert themſelves in the cauſe of God, of religion, of mankind [y]. Let them continue to expoſe the futility and pernicious tendency of the opinions and views of the enemies of Chriſtianity and of virtue: let their lives, let their

[y] Beſides the moſt learned biſhop of Glouceſter, other worthy and excellent perſons have more lately diſtinguiſhed themſelves in this noble cauſe; as Mr. Farmer, Doctors Beattie, Gerard, &c.

manners, let their example, be proofs of the ſincerity of their own belief, and of the divinity of their miſſion [z]. Let them exert their utmoſt endeavours, let them pour forth their moſt ardent prayers to their Divine Maſter, to enable them to extricate a corrupted and deluded people out of the paths of vice and crime, and to allure them to the practice of thoſe precepts, of thoſe virtues, whoſe direct and immediate tendency is to give them preſent, and enſure them future, felicity;

[z] Might they not occaſionally (at our feſtivals) clothe ſome of the children of their poor and induſtrious pariſhioners; ſupply a new-married couple with their moderate, yet neceſſary, furniture; lend ſmall ſums, without the clog-canker of intereſt, in particular caſes? Nay, why might not thoſe of opulent incomes beſtow a kind of portion on the daughters of the unfortunate, who once knew better days? &c. &c. Perhaps ſuch acts of humanity would afford them more real and laſting ſatisfaction than the pageantry of a livery ſervant or ſaddle horſe the more. Are the gratifications of vanity to be put in competition with thoſe of benevolence? or ſhall the Clergy, the diſciples of Him whoſe whole life and death was one conſtant exertion of ſelf-denial and philanthropy, ever heſitate in ſuch a caſe?

let

let the impolitic and unjuſt pillage of the tithes of the church be in ſome meaſure reſtored; and let it no longer be matter of reproach to a prudent and wiſe legiſlature in other reſpects, that the reward of the moſt ſordid offices and employments is often more [*a*] encouraging than that of a function, whoſe peculiar duty it is to inſtruct her ſubjects in the virtues of piety, probity, and loyalty.

CHAP. VIII.

Part of the ſame Subject continued, or of Non-reſidence.

NON-RESIDENCE may be reckoned a further reaſon of the diminution of the influence of virtue, and of the teachers

[*a*] "Utque gliſceret dignatio ſacerdotum, atque "ipſis promptior animus foret ad capeſſendas cere-"monias, decretum Corneliæ virgini, quæ in locum "Scantiæ capiebatur, LLS. xx." &c. Tacitus, Ann. lib. iv.

of it. Fra-Paoli has treated the ſubject of Non-reſidence hiſtorically, with his uſual learning and good-ſenſe; we therefore refer the reader to him, it being our preſent intention to conſider it in another point of view.—

The abſence of a rector, or vicar, from his living or cure, is certainly attended with many inconveniences. Firſt, it is acting contrary to the intention of the founder of the benefice. Whether this were the legiſlature, or a private perſon, it was undoubtedly meant, that the incumbent ſhould fulfil the duties of it; and Father Paul very truly obſerves: "Non mai fu penſato di tener il titolo d'un' officio, et goderne gli emolumenti, non ſervendo, ſe non dopo il." D. ii. It was given to the miniſter (as the deſignation itſelf implies), not merely upon his own account, but upon that of the poor, the uninſtructed, the licentious. It was purpoſed that the income of the

living

living ſhould contribute to the benefit of the diſtrict in which it was ſituated. The example of the Paſtor, his hoſpitality, his private converſation, his public diſcourſes, his benevolence, it was ſuppoſed, would have a conſiderable and beneficial influence, both on his opulent neighbours, and inferior and neceſſitous pariſhioners. Example, indeed, is the moſt efficacious method of reforming the manners of men. What object ſo reſpectable, ſo edifying, as that of a Clergyman diſcharging with exactneſs, fidelity, and propriety, the ſeveral duties of a public teacher of virtue, of a father of a family, of an huſband, of a parent, of a maſter, of a friend! what an happy influence muſt it have on the minds of the beholders! If then Cicero ſomewhere relates it of Scipio, that he could never conſider the images of his anceſtors without being inflamed with an ardent deſire to emulate their merits and virtues; how much more exciting than marble

or

or braſs, at beſt but dumb and inanimate repreſentations, ought to be the living example of a man of virtue, diſcharging with a zealous fervour and piety all the duties and offices of the clerical character? Can it be imagined that the reſtrained, unanimated endeavours of a timid, neceſſitous ſubſtitute will be near ſo awakening, ſo efficacious? To inſtance in profeſſions in which only the temporal intereſts of mankind are concerned, would the General of an army think he had fulfilled the intentions of his Sovereign, and the duties of his appointment; if, while himſelf indulged at eaſe and ſecurity, in the refinements, the luxuries, the pleaſures of the capital, he ſhould ſend an hired perſon to lead and command thoſe intruſted to his care and protection; to bear the fatigue of forced marches, of the inclemencies of the ſeaſons, of the varieties of climate, and the numberleſs inconveniences and hardſhips of the military life? would the conſcientious

ſcientious Phyſician think he merited the acknowledgement of his ſkill in his art, if, while viſiting all his patients by proxy, himſelf ſlumbered away his hours at home, immerſed in indolence and the pleaſures of ſenſe, thus ſhunning the danger of infection, the corrupt air of ſuffocating chambers, the pallid countenances, the trembling nerves, and often the agonizing apprehenſions of the ſick and the dying? Surely far otherwiſe. Let us then, to whom the care, not of the body, but of the ſoul, is committed; not merely of a temporal, but alſo of an eternal intereſt, guard againſt the reproach of thus ſhamefully, thus criminally, abandoning our duty. Let ſmall livings be conſolidated; and let the inſufficiency of a benefice to maintain with decency the incumbent be no longer allowed to force, in a manner, the Clergy into the odious reſource of pluralities.

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

Of the external Appearance, and Recreations, of the Clergy.

PLUTARCH, in one of his moſt admired Treatiſes, has ſhewn by a variety of inſtances and examples, that we may frequently even benefit by an enemy. Let Voltaire likewiſe be another inſtance of the truth of the obſervation. That extraordinary man, poet, hiſtorian, eſſayiſt, in one of his late Miſcellanies, among other methods ſuggeſted for leſſening the credit of the Clergy with the people, propoſes that of obliging them to wear a lay-habit. One ſhould think this hint ought to be a reaſon with them for ſome attention to their dreſs and perſonal appearance. Every day's experience convinces us of the great influence of the objects of ſight on the human mind. For what other reaſon do princes and magiſtrates affect ſuch ſplendor and magnificence

nificence in their external appearance? is it not the crown, the ball and ſceptre, the ſtately palace, the guarded equipage, more than their perſonal virtues, that dazzle and attract the admiration of the multitude [*b*]? Circumſtances therefore of ſuch a nature ſhould not be altogether diſdained and ſlighted by an order of men held out in a manner as examples and models of piety and virtue to their fellow-citizens. Undoubtedly, they ſhould principally rely on their zeal, on their probity, on their learning and merit; but ſtill their knowledge of the weak-

[*b*] Xenophon ſeems to have been highly ſenſible of the neceſſity of this attention in public characters. Καταμαθεῖν δὲ τὸ Κύρῳ δοκοῦμεν, ὡς ὁ τούτῳ μόνῳ ἐνόμιζε χρῆναι τοὺς ἄρχοντας τῶν ἀρχομένων διαφέρειν, τῷ βελτίονας αὐτῶν εἶναι, ἀλλὰ καὶ * καταγοητεύειν ᾤετο χρῆναι αὐτούς, &c. After carrying the idea very far indeed; he concludes, πάντα δὲ ταῦτα, ᾤετο φέρειν τε εἰς τὸ δυσκαταφρονητοτέρους φαίνεσθαι τοῖς ἀρχομένοις.

Κύρου Παιδείας, Βιβλ. ή.

* Gandini renders it, "ma anco giudicava, che ſi do-"veſſero cun alcune quaſi *apparenza* circondare."

neſſes

neſſes of mankind ought not to make them overlook particulars, that operate ſo unaccountably on human nature. Every thing, on the contrary, that may in any wiſe contribute to enable them more eaſily and effectually to reform the manners and exalt the minds of the various members of the commonwealth, ought to be allowed its due weight, and diligently attended to by them. We are told, that great Athenian ſtateſman Pericles ſubjected himſelf to a retired manner of life, to a great plainneſs and ſimplicity of dreſs, to a remarkable compoſure and gravity in his countenance, gait, and whole behaviour. If worldly ambition, if the love of vain-glory, rendered eaſy to him ſuch reſtraints; ſhall not purer and nobler motives make them chearfully ſubmitted to by the Clergy. It is confeſſed, that if their habits and manners differ not from thoſe of the generality, they can never expect to anſwer effectual-

ly

ly the end of their inſtitution [c]. From the hiſtory of the various orders of the Roman-catholic church, and from the accounts given us by ſenſible travelers, even of thoſe countries not yet illuminated by the light of the Goſpel, we find this way of thinking concurred in equally by the prieſts of Popery and of Paganiſm. What they find expedient, and carefully attend to, influenced by falſe notions of religion, intereſted motives, or in order to delude the multitude; let our Clergy turn to the benefit and ſalvation of their ſeveral countries. Let us avoid all vulgar and unimproving amuſements. Surely, neither

[c] "Il pourroit arriver de mille manieres, que "le Clerge auroit ſi peu de credit, que les autres "citoyens en auroient d'avantage. Ainſi, au lieu "de ſe ſeparer, il aimeroit mieux ſupporter les memes "charges que les laiques, et ne faire à cet egard "qu'un meme corps: mais, comme il chercheroit "toujours à s'attirer le reſpect du peuple, il ſe diſ-"tingueroit par une vie plus retirée, une conduite "plus reſervée, et des mœurs plus pures," &c. Eſprit des Loix, l. xix. c. 27. where he treats of the Engliſh Conſtitution, without naming it.

the pleaſures of the chace, of the ball-room [*d*], or of the turf, are becoming the character of a miniſter of Jeſus, of a teacher of the precepts and doctrines of the Goſpel. Mr. Locke obſerves ſomewhere very juſtly, that, in order to employ our time to profit and advantage, we muſt be content to give ſome part of it to relaxation and amuſement. But then there is a choice of amuſements, as well as of ſerious purſuits. Nothing, therefore, that has the moſt diſtant tendency to vice, or to degrade us in the eyes of the people, ought to be conſidered in this light. The ſame great man points out many innocent and even profitable ways of filling up theſe neceſſary blanks in life. I think he recommends the engraver's ſtyle, the gardener's ſpade, the pencil and pallet, &c. Exerciſe alſo on horſeback, or on foot, contribute greatly to health; and let it not ſeem ridiculous

[*d*] Perhaps only a too frequent appearance there would be improper.

to

to ſay ſo, even to piety. The wild or the improved ſcenes of nature; or in the words of the poet,

Each rural ſight, each rural ſound;

the muſic of the woods and groves, the perfume of the air and fields, the lapſe of rivers, the herds, the flocks, all the beauties and varieties of the landſcape, unite in communicating a delightful ſatisfaction to the body, a pleaſing compoſure to the mind, in filling our hearts with joy and gratitude, and in raiſing them in ſpontaneous contemplation to that great and beneficent Being, to whom we are indebted for ſuch a paradiſe of enjoyments, "who has ſhowered "his bleſſings on us with ſuch a laviſh "and unwithdrawing hand." After ſuch a philoſophical airing, with what complacence and renewed ardour will the pariſh-prieſt return to the pious and humane duties and offices of his function! When ſo many and ſo great are his obligations to the kind Parent of the univerſe,

how trifling, mean, and inconſiderable a tribute of praiſe, thankſgiving, and acknowledgement, will he reckon all his endeavours, all his labours!

CHAP. X.

Part of the ſame Subject continued.

CONSIDERING the inſufficiency of the income of the greater part of the Clergy for their decent ſupport, and as the legiſlature has thought proper to exclude them, in a great meaſure, from all the ways of gain; perhaps it would neither be unreaſonable, nor contrary to good policy, to allow or encourage them to practiſe medicine, or to follow agriculture [*f*]. I can ſee nothing in either ſcience inconſiſtent with the clerical character. The former ſeems intimately

[*f*] In a ſynod held at Weſtminſter, in 1127, by William Curboil, the Clergy are permitted to farm, by the ſeventh canon. Cont. Flor. Wex.

connected

connected with it. How much more uſeful might it render the Clergy to their induſtrious and deſerving pariſhioners, when ſuffering at once under poverty and ſickneſs! They are upon the ſpot; can adminiſter immediate relief: they alſo know the manner of life, the habits and tempers of their leſs neceſſitous neighbours: and every one acknowledges how uſeful and ſalutary it is both to the patient and phyſician, for the latter to be well acquainted with theſe circumſtances. Indeed, during ſome ages, the Clergy were the principal, or only phyſicians; and not merely thoſe of inferior rank and preferment, but even they of the higheſt and moſt dignified ſtations [g]. By encouraging them, therefore, to practiſe this very beneficial and honourable ſcience, we do

[g] Of many inſtances to give but one. Eutychius, biſhop of Alexandria, was equally eminent for his knowledge of medicine and of theology. He illuſtrated both of them by his writings: he flouriſhed in the tenth century. Moſheim, vol. i. p. 442.

no more than reſtore them to their original rights. It is connected with almoſt every branch of uſeful learning, and has a peculiar tendency to increaſe our knowledge and admiration of the wiſdom and goodneſs of God in the various works of Creation and Providence. The public too would be no inconſiderable gainers by the Clergy's thus enlarging the ſphere of their ſtudies and labours for the good of mankind. The art being chiefly in the hands of the Clerical Order [*b*], thoſe who would have otherwiſe purſued it, might follow commerce or ſome other way of life.

As to agriculture, perhaps ſome may think it not ſo conſiſtent with the decorum required in a miniſter of the Goſpel: however, when under proper reſtrictions, I own it does not appear to me in this light. I would not have a Clergy-

[*b*] Notwithſtanding the above expreſſion, it is not meant that the Clergy ſhould make an abſolute Monopoly of Phyſic.

man treat perſonally with butchers and drovers, attend fairs, &c.: but might not all this be done by an hind or ſteward? The permiſſion of this ſuſtaining ſcience would be a great benefit to the inferior Clergy, would enable them to live with comfort and credit, to keep hoſpitality, to breed their children to ſucceed them, to follow trade, or to ſerve their country in her fleets and armies. The exerciſe to which either purſuit would neceſſarily oblige them, would contribute to their health and enjoyment, and defend them from that liſtleſſneſs and languor to which a ſedentary life is unavoidably ſubject.

CHAP. XI.

Should the Clergy intereſt themſelves in the Public Welfare?

THE diſciples of our Lord and Saviour were perſons of obſcure birth and parentage, without property or connexions.

The opinions they endeavoured to propagate were a kind of hereſy, and new belief, where Judaiſm or Paganiſm prevailed. As therefore they wanted countenance, or connivance, it would have been highly imprudent in them to pretend to cenſure the meaſures of government, or to hazard the diſpleaſure of their ſuperiors; beſides, with reſpect to Rome, they were aliens and ſtrangers of a ſubdued and deſpiſed nation. The utmoſt they could reaſonably hope was, not to be oppoſed or reſtrained in diffuſing and inculcating thoſe opinions and tenets on which our Salvation depends. But could Chriſtianity, in their times, have become the eſtabliſhed religion of the ſtate, they would probably have acted, in this reſpect, in a different manner, and with very great reaſon. For what ſhould we think of an order of men conſiſting of many thouſands, and poſſeſſed of ſome part of the property of a country, who ſhould be totally inattentive and indifferent to the conduct of

public

public affairs? are they not deeply intereſted in the welfare and proſperity of the commonwealth? have they not ſomething to loſe? are they not connected by blood and affinity to numberleſs individuals? As they are ſo conveniently ſituated for it, being ſtationed in every quarter and diſtrict of the kingdom, is it not their duty to warn their neighbours of approaching dangers, to rouze them to oppoſe, to prevent, impending evils? If it be confeſſed that the integrity and virtue, as well as happineſs of man, ſo much depends on the legal freedom he enjoys; if in deſpotic ſtates he is deſpoiled of all the honours of his nature; if, inſtead of ingenuous, he is inſidious; inſtead of diſintereſted, he is mercenary; inſtead of benevolent, he is unfeeling; if, inſtead of acting on the generous ſentiments of juſtice and honour, the vileſt and moſt corrupt principles determine his conduct; ſurely it is in an high meaſure the duty of the Clergy, both as citizens and paſtors,

to watch over the liberty and independence of their country, to exert their moſt ſtrenuous endeavours to repel licentiouſneſs on the one hand, and deſpotiſm on the other. Their ſtudies, their reflexions, their knowledge of hiſtory, and of the nature and end of all political government, particularly point out and force upon them this part of their duty, and the criminality of the neglect of it. This attention has, indeed, in ſome inſtances, been groſsly abuſed; but is it, therefore, to be intirely relinquiſhed [*i*]? The attention of the art of war, to affairs of civil government, has been ruinous to the liberty and independence of many ſtates;

[*i*] Monteſquieu obſerves very juſtly againſt Bayle. "C'eſt mal raiſonner contre religion (or againſt any "thing) de raſſembler, dans un grand ouvrage, une "long énumération des maux qu'elle a produits, ſi "l'on ne fait de même celle des biens qu'elle à faits. "Si je voulois raconter tous les maux qu'ont produit "dans le monde les loix civiles, la monarchie, le "gouvernement républicain, je dirois les choſes ef-"froyables." De l'Eſprit des Loix, l. xxiv. c. 2.

that

that of medicine to health, when unſkilfully applied, has been fatal to thouſands; and in how many inſtances has not equity ſuffered by the perverſion of law? yet liberty, health, and juſtice, are greatly indebted to the right and juſt uſe and application of all theſe ſeveral ſciences.

The ſame may be ſaid of the attention of the Clergy to public affairs. It has been attended in our own and in other countries with many pernicious conſequences; yet we owe to it, in a great meaſure, the improvement of our preſent envied conſtitution; and, among our neighbours, it has alſo been attended with various ſalutary effects. It is the buſineſs of the legiſlature to confine it within due bounds, not intirely to diſcourage and ſuppreſs it: while thoſe in power and office have principally in view the welfare and glory of the commonwealth, they will ſeldom or never have reaſon to complain of it; and unleſs the legal prerogatives of the crown on the one hand,

or

or the undoubted and unalienable rights of the people on the other, be openly violated, or in manifeſt danger of violation, the arguments and eloquence of the Clergy will be fruitleſs, and of no avail.

CHAP. XII.

Of Teſts, or Subſcription to Articles in Matter of Religion.

Καὶ τῶν ἀνθρώπων ἀσφαλέσαλα τέτες οἰκεῖν οἳ ἂν τοῖς παρεῤῥέσιν ἤθεσι καὶ νόμοις, ἢν καὶ χείρω ᾖ, ἥκιςα διαφόρως πολιτεύωσι.

Thucydides, lib. vi. c. 18. p. 391.

THE wiſeſt nations and legiſlators have acknowledged the propriety and neceſſity of aſſent, or Subſcription, to Articles of Belief. There ſeems, indeed, to be no other effectual means by which to prevent the fatal conſequences of ſuperſtition and fanaticiſm. By a law of Solon's, mentioned in Stobæus, no perſon could

could be admitted, at Athens, even to any civil office or magiſtracy, without taking an oath to maintain the religion of the ſtate. The early Chriſtians ſaw the expediency of what is called the Apoſtles Creed. The Reformed churches in the infancy of the Reformation, and afterwards, had all of them their formularies or confeſſions of faith [*k*]. And in what other manner can diverſity and even contrariety of opinion on the moſt important doctrines of religion be prevented? The ſcripture is an ample, unbounded field; and if every one be permitted to ſpring what game in it he pleaſes, in what a wilderneſs of oppoſite tenets and opinions ſhall we not be embarraſſed and entangled? Notwithſtanding the reſtleſs, unremitted vigilance of the court of Rome, with all the long horrors of the Inquiſition, with what an innumerable train of monſtrous, abſurd, and diabolical opinions, ſubverſive

[*k*] How many of our own parliaments have approved of a teſt-act!

of

of all religion and government, was not Europe deluged with, even before the Reformation! Every one, that knows any thing of hiſtory, has ſhuddered with horror in peruſing the impious and peſtilent errors, with their deſtructive conſequences, of the Manichæans, of the Beghards or Picards, of the Flagellants, &c. The æra of the Reformation, ſo ſalutary in other reſpects, for ſome time rather encreaſed than diminiſhed the catalogue. The enormities of John of Leyden, and of his followers, and of how many as mad as they, one ſhould think a ſufficient warning to us, not to afford an unbounded opening to ſuch deſtructive deluſions. It is the nature of man to weary of every thing, to hate reſtraint, to delight in novelty, to wiſh to diſtinguiſh himſelf by the ſingularity and even extravagancy of his opinions. Perhaps the impieties of atheiſm, hereſy, and infidelity, have been more owing to this principle, than to any intention in the authors

of

of them to encourage and foment the crimes and exceſſes of mankind, though this indeed be their natural tendency. It ſeems the duty then of the legiſlature to guard againſt ſo deſtructive a propenſity. May not therefore articles of belief, or of ſilence, be enjoined, and aſſent or ſubſcription required to them at leaſt from every paſtor of the commonwealth? If ſuch an expedient be not adopted, or continued, it appears probable, that the generality will be at a loſs what to believe, or rather will have no belief at all. Might it not be alleged—In the morning we ſhall be told, that Jeſus Chriſt is the ſon of God, that he is God incarnate, &c. &c.; in the afternoon, that he is none of all theſe, but ſimply the ſon of Joſeph, conceived and generated of Mary in a natural way; yet ſtill, perhaps, in other reſpects, he will be allowed an extraordinary perſon. Now our pulpits will echo with the partizans of faith, anon with thoſe of good works. One while the Trinity will be an Holy Myſtery,

Myſtery, another an impious and unintelligible jargon. If our Liturgy continue in its preſent ſtate, to-day the Athanaſian Creed will be neceſſary to ſalvation; to-morrow, a chain of abſurdities that diſhonour the Deity, and even diſgrace common-ſenſe. Such apparently will be the probable effects of throwing down the pale of uniformity, and of admitting to Holy Orders all ſuch as profeſs to make the Sacred Scriptures, as they chuſe to underſtand, explain, and interpret them, the rule of their faith and religious ſentiments [*l*]. Might it not be conſidered by thoſe worthy and well-meaning perſons

[*l*] Perhaps it would not be difficult to prove, that moſt of the hereſies that have infatuated and infeſted the world, have been chiefly owing to this contended-for right of private interpretation. Hence has it not been ſaid, "de l'Ecriture que c'eſt un "pays où les hommes de toutes les ſectes font des "deſcentes, et vont comme au pillage; que c'eſt un "champ de bataille, ou les nations ennemies qui ſe "rencontrent livrent bien des combats, ou l'on s'at-"taque, ou l'on s'eſcarmouche de bien des ma-"niéres."

who

who incline to this way of thinking, that moſt alterations, either in civil or eccleſiaſtical conſtitutions, are commonly attended with very dangerous conſequences, and carried in the end to a much greater length than perhaps was ever deſigned by the firſt movers. Had his cauſe been good, the reaſoning of Soderino in Father Paul is unanſwerable [*m*]. Indeed, one alteration, one conceſſion, is only meant in general to prepare the way for another. The repeated ones obtained from the firſt

[*m*] " Anzi, queſto eſſer un mezo d'aumentare à " loro il credito. Imperoche la plebe, che ſempre " giudice dalli evènti, quando, per l'emenda ſequita, " reſtarà certificata, che con ragioni — repreſo in " qualche parte, ſi perſuadera ſimilmente, ch'anco " l'altre novita propoſte habbiano buoni fondamenti: " e gli hereſiarchi videndo d'haver la vinta in una " parte, non ceſſaranno di reprendere l'altre — In " tutte le coſe humane avvenire, che il ricevere ſodiſ- " fettioſe in alcune richieſte, da pretenſione di pro- " cacciarne altre, e di ſtimare che ſiano dovute. — " Neſſuna coſa far perire un governo maggiormente, " che il mutar i modi di reggerlo: l'aprire vie nuove " e non uſate, eſſere un eſporſi à gravi pericoli." Fra-Paolo, lib. i. p. 24. edit. Genev.

Charles

Charles ended in the ruin of epiſcopacy, of monarchy, and of that unhappy prince himſelf. The decline of the credit and authority of the antient Roman Senate or Ariſtocracy was owing to ſimilar cauſes. But ſhould we not take care, how we authorize the uſe of weapons, to pull down, in many reſpects, an excellent and much-envied eſtabliſhment, that were nobly pointed againſt the tyranny of the one, or the few? How ſanguine and charitable ſoever may be our hopes, it is greatly to be feared, that no alterations propoſed will ever gain over the enemies of our Redeemer. It is not againſt the outworks of our church that their batteries are planted; it is againſt the citadel, againſt the main fabrick. The more you degrade and humanize the Author of your religion, the leſs ſucceſsful will be your miniſtry, the more will the partizans of atheiſm and infidelity exult and triumph. Had the obſervance of the Two Tables been enjoined

to the Iſraelites by an authority merely human, would they have been received with the ſame ſubmiſſion and reverence? Weaken the belief of a Revelation, of an incarnate Saviour, of his final judgement, you impiouſly deſpoil him of all his glories, and leave no reſtraint on the paſſions of men, on the generality, but their fear of human cenſure, of the axe and the gibbet, By this pious, but vain, deſire of making Divine Revelation and Human Reaſon coincide; perhaps it is to be apprehended, that at laſt you may reaſon yourſelves out of every thing that is deſirable, valuable, and excellent. Theſe are the reflexions of one who has not been in the way of reading any [n] thing written, either on one

[n] Though he differs from him, he muſt except the moderate and ingenious Pamphlet of the Reverend Mr. Wyvill, of Black-Notley in Eſſex. Notwithſtanding the above obſervations, it is not contended, that our Liturgy, &c. ſhould remain on their preſent foot. Conſidering the progreſs of ſcience ſince the Reformation, many learned and candid perſons ſeem juſtly of opinion, that a reviſal and correction

one ſide or the other, relative to what is at preſent ſo much a ſubject of converſation. Theſe are his unbiaſſed, unprejudiced reflexions. He feels for a Religion, through which he hopes for Salvation: he feels for an order of men, on whom, next to God, its ſafety and preſervation depend,

of them would be attended with good effects; but certainly (for Father Paul's reaſons) too great caution cannot be uſed in a matter of ſuch moment,

CONCLUSION.

THUS we have pointed out ſome of the benefits derived to mankind from Revelation; we have conſidered ſeveral important queſtions relating to the Clergy; we have ſhewn the utility of the Sacerdotal Character; we have propoſed the ſketch of a plan of Study to the younger Clergy, and hinted with what views and intentions they ought to engage in their ſacred function: then follow ſome reflexions on the cauſes of the decline of the influence of Religion, and of her Miniſters, and the remedies are inſinuated. The external appearance and the recreations of the Clergy come next under conſideration. Laſt of all ſome reaſons are ſuggeſted, why it ſeems the duty of the public inſtructors of the people to pay ſome attention to the adminiſtration of the commonwealth. We know not in what manner our endeavours may be

received by the public. Their benefit is ultimately intended, though apparently only that of a particular order of the ſtate. But the increaſe of the influence of the Clergy, ariſing from their ſuitable accommodation, learning, and piety, muſt ever be attended with moſt beneficial conſequences to the reſt of their fellow-citizens. The writer, therefore, flatters himſelf, that the latter will approve his ſentiments, whatever may be their opinion of the manner in which they are conveyed; from the former, he truſts to receive approbation and eſteem.

THE END.

BRITISH
19 JY 77
MUSEUM